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SENATE BILL 2780 By
Harper

HOUSE BILL 2519
By Pruitt

AN ACT to name a segment of State Route 1 (Lafayette Street or U.S. Highway 41/70S) in Metropolitan Nashville Davidson County in honor of the late Robert E. Lillard.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges to honor the memory of those exemplary public servants who, during their lifetimes, contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, no Tennessean is more deserving of this honor than the late Robert Emmitt Lillard, formerly of Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, born on March 23, 1907, in Trimble Springs Bottom in South Nashville, Robert Emmitt Lillard spent his entire lifetime in Nashville; his life was marked by noble accomplishments, limitless love for his family and friends, complete devotion to his home and his country, unrestricted dedication to the practice of law, and a deep religious belief; and

WHEREAS, having aspired from his youth to be a lawyer, Robert E. Lillard attended Biggins Commercial College and Kent College of Law, earning his law degree and admission to

the Tennessee Bar in 1936; he was admitted to practice before the Federal District Court in 1955, the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in 1957, and the Supreme Court in 1962; and

WHEREAS, always dedicated to the service of his fellow man, this patriotic American served with acumen and alacrity as an employee of the Metropolitan Fire Department from 1936 until 1950, during which time he also maintained a part-time law practice; and

WHEREAS, in 1950, Mr. Lillard established a full-time legal practice and embarked upon an accomplished career in politics; he served on the Nashville City Council from 1951 to 1963 and on the Metropolitan Nashville Council from 1963 to 1971, earning high praise from his peers and constituents alike for his wholehearted dedication to the well-being of his City; and

WHEREAS, well-known throughout Nashville's legal community for his shrewd judgment, he was appointed to the State Board of Paroles in 1964 and reappointed in 1967; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, Robert E. Lillard was appointed Judge of the First Circuit Court of Davidson County; he thus holds a singular position in Nashville history as the first African American Judge of a Circuit Court in Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, his great love of the law and his steadfast desire to serve his fellow citizens drove him to his many accomplishments; he will be long remembered as an effective advocate and formidable adversary; and

WHEREAS, Judge Lillard's professional life was filled with countless activities and accomplishments; notably, he was the only two-term President in the history of the Nashville Bar Association, serving from 1961 until 1963, and was one of the Founders of the J.C. Napier Lawyer's Association, which later became the Napier-Looby Bar Association; and

WHEREAS, Judge Lillard was a person of impeccable morals and irreproachable integrity, who worked assiduously to establish a brighter future for the good people of Nashville and Davidson County; he served his fellow citizens faithfully and energetically in numerous other capacities and he selflessly devoted his time and energies to making Nashville and Davidson County a better place to live; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his professional accomplishments, Robert E. Lillard was most thankful for the love and companionship he shared with his family, and he was committed to maintaining the highest standard of family and community values; and

WHEREAS, Robert E. Lillard leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, this legislative body finds it most appropriate to honor the life and accomplishments of this exceptional public servant and human being by means of a permanent memorial; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, that segment of State Route 1 (Lafayette Street or U.S. Highway 41/70S) from its intersection with 8th Avenue to its intersection with Fesslers Lane in Metropolitan Nashville Davidson County is hereby designated as the "Robert E. Lillard Memorial Highway" as a lasting tribute to one of the most dedicated public servants, accomplished attorneys and distinguished jurists this state has ever known.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating such segment of State Route 1 as the "Robert E. Lillard Memorial Highway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.